

Application No. 10/680,453
Amendment dated June 22, 2007
Reply to Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment of June 13, 2007

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of producing a gloss exterior finish on a hearing aid ear shell, the ear shell having a vent, comprising the steps of:
 - (a) manufacturing a hearing aid ear shell by stereolithographic processes;
then
 - (b) coating the ear shell with a layer of an UV-curable substance;
 - (c) permitting a portion of the UV-curable substance to drain off the ear shell, leaving a residual uncured layer of the UV-curable substance on the ear shell;
 - (d) exposing the ear shell to UV light to cure the residual uncured layer of the UV-curable substance;
 - (e) removing any excess of the UV-curable substance from step (d); and
 - (f) exposing the ear shell to UV light a second time.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the UV-curable substance further comprises a photo-curable polymer.
3. (Canceled)
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the step (e) is performed by rinsing the ear shell in an alcohol bath.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein the step (e) is performed with exposure of the ear shell to ultrasound in the alcohol bath.

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6. (Previously Presented) A method of producing a gloss exterior finish on a hearing aid ear shell, the ear shell having a vent, comprising the steps of:
- (a) pre-sizing the ear shell thickness to account for increased thickness added by steps (c) through (g);
 - (b) manufacturing a hearing aid shell by stereolithographic processes; then
 - (c) without removing UV-curable substance left on the ear shell, coating the ear shell with a UV-curable substance, creating a new layer of UV-curable substance;
 - (d) permitting a portion of the UV-curable substance to drain off the ear shell, leaving a residual uncured layer of the UV-curable substance on the ear shell;
 - (e) exposing the ear shell to UV light to cure the residual uncured layer of the UV-curable substance;
 - (f) removing any excess of the UV-curable substance from step(e); and
 - (g) exposing the ear shell to UV light a second time.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the UV-curable substance further comprises a photo-curable polymer.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6, wherein the step (f) is performed by rinsing the ear shell in an alcohol bath.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, wherein the step (f) is performed with exposure of the ear shell to ultrasound in the alcohol bath.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a gloss exterior finish on a hearing aid shell, the ear shell having a vent, comprising the steps of:

- (a) pre-sizing the ear shell thickness to account for increased thickness added by steps (c) through (g);
- (b) manufacturing a hearing aid ear shell by stereolithographic processes; then

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(c) without removing photo-curable polymer left on the ear shell, coating the ear shell with a layer of a photo-curable polymer;

(d) permitting a portion of the photo-curable polymer to drain off the ear shell, leaving residual uncured layer of the photo-curable polymer on the ear shell;

(e) exposing the ear shell to UV light to cure the residual uncured layer of the photo-curable polymer;

(f) removing any excess of the photo-curable polymer; and

(g) exposing the ear shell to UV light a second time.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the step (f) is performed by rinsing the ear shell in an alcohol bath.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the step (f) is performed with exposure of the ear shell to ultrasound in the alcohol bath.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, wherein the photo-curable polymer is the same as that used during stereolithography.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the gloss exterior finish on the hearing aid ear shell prevents build up of cerumen (ear wax), dirt, and perspiration on the hearing aid shell.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the gloss exterior finish on the hearing aid ear shell has a thickness of approximately 0.10 millimeters (mm).

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the thickness depends on a property of the UV-curable substance.

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17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the property of the UV-curable substance is viscosity.
18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein the property of the UV-curable substance is build temperature.
19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the step (d) is carried out for approximately three (3) minutes.
20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the step (f) is carried out for approximately thirty (30) minutes.